



TRINITY TIMES

The Newsletter of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Hampstead, NC
www.holytrinityhampstead.com

June 2020

EDITOR'S NOTE: Activities outlined in this newsletter are subject to change due to COVID-19 restrictions.

In Which City Do You Live?

By Father Ron

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness,...it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness.” Many of us recognize the opening lines to Charles Dickens’ famous novel, *A Tale of Two Cities*. The two cities that were the focal point of Dickens’ novel were Paris and London during the days of the French Revolution.

When we think about our world today, in many ways Dickens was a prophet. We indeed live in the midst of two cities at once – the city of humanity and the city of God. In the city of humanity in which we live we can easily say it is the “age of foolishness,” and the “season of darkness.” The city of humanity is a place where people place their trust on houses of sand and where they are motivated by self-interests. The city of God, though, is where homes are built on the rock of God’s redeeming grace in Jesus Christ and where ordinary people place their trust on doing the common good which transcends the immediate emotions of the moment.

Throughout the ages, some faithful men and women have tried to live into the city of God, but the challenges and unpredictability of daily living

kept them focused on the city of humanity. There are others who are so immersed in their own needs, desires, self-interests and actions that they make us feel like it is “the worst of times.”

Over the last few months, when our lives have been turned upside down and normal is anything but normal, I am grateful to the men and women who have witnessed the best of times by their selfless concern for humanity, for their compassion and love. For me this was manifested a few weeks ago when a young man stopped by the church one afternoon and asked if I were the pastor. After responding “yes,” he placed \$200 in cash in my hand. He stated that he was doing well but knew there were many people hurting in the community and wanted to help. He hesitated to give me his name and didn’t want any acknowledgment of this generous gift.

I believe the tension between the two cities can be summed up this way: “The city of humanity tends to drive people apart; the city of God tries to bring people together. The city of humanity is governed by laws, but the city of God is governed by love.” Yes, as Christians we are called to live into this tension, but not be governed by it! We should have our feet planted in the city of humanity, but our hearts and actions planted in the city of God.

We hold dual citizenship in both the city of humanity and the city of God. We cannot live in both of them equally. Our existence as Christians is: *A Tale of Two Cities*. Which city claims your primary allegiance? Where are you investing your time, your energy, your treasures? In which city do you find your hope and joy and, most of all, your peace? The answers to these questions will determine whether our lives reflect the “best of times” or the “worst of times.”



Steward Your New Community

Like a caterpillar emerging from a cocoon to new life as a butterfly, we can steward our congregations and communities to awaken from Covid-19 to a more excellent reality that brims with faith, hope and love.

Covid-19's hardship, deprivation and grief have inspired an outpouring of kindness, generosity, selflessness, neighborliness and courageous service. Suffering has given us a glimpse of what our communities can and should be, following Christ's two principal commands: love God and love one another.

Our stewardship opportunity and challenge is clear: Can we cultivate this renewed spirit of loving neighborliness as a "new normal"? As our community's central, defining ethos?

The last several months have taught us much:

- **Life is precious.** Everyone counts. No exceptions.
- **We suffer together.** Shared pain creates strong bonds.
- **Serving brings fulfillment.** Many sacrifice joyfully.
- **We need each other.** We can't go it alone.
- **We miss each other.** We require human interaction.
- **Personal contact is sublime.** Nothing beats face-to-face.
- **We are grateful.** Thank God for what we have.
- **We are wiser.** We know what's important.

Covid-19 is receding, though slowly. Much pain lies ahead. Before it's through, the virus will claim more of our friends and loved ones. Many families will suffer economically.



	Month Ended Apr. 30, 2020	Year to Date Apr. 30, 2020	Annual Budget 2020
Pledged Offerings	\$ 8,075.00	\$ 34,663.50	\$118,000.00
Total Income	\$ 8,443.01	\$ 38,426.97	\$131,660.00
Total Expenses	\$ 7,183.83*	\$ 46,658.05	\$131,660.00
CASH FLOW	\$ 1,249.19*	(\$ 8,231.08)*	\$ 0
NOTE: Includes Investment Income/(Loss) of:			
	\$ 3,725.02	(\$ 5,423.57)	

But the virus is also teaching us anew how to be loving neighbors. As Covid-19 abates, we can deepen these lessons and steward our communities to live more closely aligned with God's purposes, to discover life abundant with joy, connection, fulfillment and generosity. With God's help, our congregations and communities can emerge from our Covid-19 cocoon to a more excellent reality, centered in faith, hope and love.

Copyright © 2020, Rev. Robert Blezard. Pastor Blezard serves as an assistant to the bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, ELCA, and works as content editor for www.stewardshipoflife.org. He blogs at www.thestewardshipguy.com

June Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays:

- 2 Dominic Clinch
Pat Stafford
- 4 Carolyn Beddow
- 11 Vivian Kersey
- 12 Jason Clinch
- 22 John Wolfe
- 23 Kathleen Abrams

Anniversaries:

- 8 Ron & Kathleen
Abrams
- 12 Norm & Pat Gopsill
- 14 Jim & Doris Cook



News from the Junior Warden

As we transition into the next phase of this pandemic, I want to express my thanks for all of you who have been helping keep our church in top condition. My Angel lawn and garden people, you have been maintaining our lawn and the flower beds and shrubbery so consistently and it looks great! I thank you!

I would like to give a shout out to Lou Elias and Bruce Pennington who are busy installing new faucets and toilet paper holders for the bathrooms. Great job, guys!

Thank you to the ECW ladies who made arrangements to have all the floors cleaned during our absence. They look great!

As you can see, life goes on and despite Covid-19 restrictions, the church needs to be maintained. I am so proud of these generous and thoughtful people who continue to keep our church running smoothly and looking great.

As the days and weeks pass and we are able to return to a more normal worship schedule, more help will be needed. Please consider signing up and stepping up to take care of our beautiful building and grounds – by trimming bushes, mowing the lawn, sweeping, cleaning up – inside and outside, painting (if required), patching, etc. It takes a village!

Jackie Redington, Jr Warden

Outdoor Worship

Beginning May 17, Holy Trinity has been holding its Sunday Eucharistic service outdoors on the lawn in front of the Memorial Garden. Nearly 50 people worshipped that first Sunday, enjoying the beautiful sunshine and joyously greeting one another once again, while practicing social distancing and with masks in place.

Per the Bishop's direction, we will continue to worship outdoors, weather permitting, and with the proper restrictions in place **through the end of June**. Congregational singing is out, but Catherine has been making beautiful music on a portable keyboard, and people have been heard humming to the familiar tunes.

Bring your chairs and join us next Sunday!



Each month, we will highlight one of the wild and crazy holidays our nation (and the world) celebrates...just for the fun of it!



June's Wacky Holiday:

June 8th – World Oceans Day

World Oceans Day is a special global day to celebrate our oceans, and to work towards maintaining and improving their health and cleanliness. As the health of our oceans goes, so goes the health of the entire planet.

Oceans comprise about 71% of the surface of the earth. With their immense size, you would think it is very hard to pollute our oceans. Well, we happen to be doing a pretty good job polluting them.

Use this special day, to become more knowledgeable about how we are polluting the oceans with litter of all kinds, from just about any source you can imagine. Tsunamis devastate coastal areas and drag pollutants into the sea. A Tsunami in Japan resulted in tons of trash washing up on U.S. west coast beaches. Oil is leaked from oil rigs, ships, and boats. Plastics of all kinds, which take many years to break down, find their way into our seas. Plastics in particular can have a devastating effect on marine life.

A clean and healthy ocean translates to healthy marine life. This results in safe and healthy seafood that you and I consume. What can you do on *World Oceans Day*, to improve the health of our oceans?

World Oceans Day was first proposed by the Canadian government at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. In 2008, a United Nations resolution made this holiday official. Since 2004, the organization "Ocean Project" has strived to advance ocean conservation. On *World Oceans Day*, this organization works with schools, museums, aquariums, and other groups, to promote and coordinate educational programs about ocean health.

◆◆◆◆ Outdoor Worship with Eucharist: 10:00 am ◆◆◆◆

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Holy Trinity is a Christ-centered community. We are dedicated to reaching and helping people seeking to know God and to serve God.